

REMARKS

Claims 1 through 55 are currently pending in the application.

Claims 6 through 55 are withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention.

Claims 1 through 5 currently stand rejected.

This amendment is in response to the final Office Action of October 9, 2003.

Information Disclosure Statement(s)

Applicant notes the filing of an Information Disclosure Statement herein on July 24, 2003 and notes that a copy of the PTO-1449 was not returned with the outstanding Office Action. Applicant respectfully requests that the information cited on the PTO-1449 be made of record herein.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejections

Obviousness Rejection Based on Bierig (U.S. Patent 4,089,734) in view of Rostoker et al. (U.S. Patent 5,838,163)

Claims 1 through 3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bierig (U.S. Patent 4,089,734) in view of Rostoker et al. (U.S. Patent 5,838,163). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection, as hereinafter set forth.

Applicant submits that to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Third, the cited prior art reference must teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. Furthermore, the suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art, and not based on Applicant's disclosure.

Applicant has amended the claims to require that the probe card be configured to include at least two distinct leads which respectively supply and receive test signals to and from the semiconductor die under test. Applicants request entry of the amendment as it is timely filed, contains no new matter, and raises no new issues. Support for the amendment which complies with the provisions of 35 U.S.C. § 132 can be found in the specification at paragraph 0016, where the additional limitation which constitutes the amendment is recited. Applicant respectfully submits that the references as combined in the Office Action do not and cannot establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 with respect to the claims as presently amended.

At the very least, the references as combined in the Office Action fail to teach or suggest all of the claim limitations, in particular, separate probe elements configured to supply and receive test signals to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103 regarding the presently claimed invention. Bierig, which, but for an active fuse or the provision thereof, teaches or suggests, as asserted in the Office Action, all elements of Applicant's method as recited in claim 1, as well as all of the structures included in the probe card formed by Applicant's method, fails to show electrically separate leads, let alone a segregation between those which function to supply signal to a device under test and those which function to receive signal from the device under test.. Figure 4a of Bierig, referenced in the Office Action, shows leads 51 which branch from a common center lead, and electrically interconnect again at a bus 42. The leads are clearly not electrically independent, and thus would not be able to separately carry supplied and received signal. Furthermore, Rostoker only teaches or suggests devices which *send* test signals, and fails to teach or suggest an apparatus which also receives test signals. Applicant thus submits that the element added in the amendment is not taught or suggested by either reference, and thus presently amended independent claim 1 is allowable, and claims 2, 3 and 5 are allowable as depending from an allowable independent claim.

Obviousness Rejection Based on Bierig (U.S. Patent 4,089,734)/Rostoker et al. (U.S. Patent 5,838,163) as applied to claims 1 and 3 above, and further in view of Maruyama et al. (U.S. Patent 5,832,595)

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bierig (U.S. Patent 4,089,734)/Rostoker et al. (U.S. Patent 5,838,163) as applied to claims 1 and 3 above, and further in view of Maruyama et al. (U.S. Patent 5,832,595). Applicant respectfully submits that the arguments presented above are applicable, and claim 4 is allowable as depending from an allowable independent claim.

Applicant submits that claims 1 through 5 are clearly allowable over the cited prior art.

In the first paragraph on page 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner has requested claims with reference numerals. Applicant has provided, in an Appendix, reference numerals next to each element of claim 1. The numerals are taken directly from Figure 1, which is merely one embodiment of the invention of claim 1. Claims 2 through 5 further specify the elements in claims 1, and in the interest of avoiding redundancy, they are not shown in the Appendix.

Applicant requests entry of this amendment for the following reasons:

The amendment is timely filed.

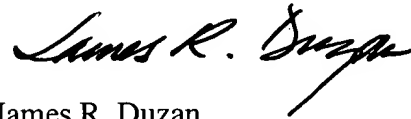
The amendment places the application in condition for allowance.

The amendment does not require any further search or consideration.

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In summary, Applicant requests the entry of this amendment, the allowance of claims 1 through 5, and the case passed for issue.

Respectfully submitted,



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APPENDIX

1. (Currently Amended) A method of forming a probe card (30) comprising:
providing a substrate (32) having a first surface (35) and a second surface (37);
disposing a plurality of conductive traces (34) adjacent at least one of the first surface (35) and
the second surface (37);
providing a plurality of probe elements (38) in electrical communication with the plurality of
conductive traces (34), wherein at least a first one of said probe elements is configured
for supplying a test signal, and wherein at least a second one of said probe elements is
configured for receiving a test signal; and
providing a plurality of fuse elements (42) in respective electrical communication with at least
some of the plurality of conductive traces (34), at least some of the plurality of fuse
elements (42) disposed immediately adjacent the at least one of the first surface (35) and
the second surface (37), at least some of said plurality of fuse elements (42) comprising at
least two types of fuses of an active fuse element, a passive fuse element, a self-resetting
fuse element, a repairable fuse element, and a replaceable fuse element.